

SARL NEWS - SUNDAY 8 APRIL 2012

You are listening to ZS6SRL, the official radio station of the South African Radio League, the national body for amateur radio in South Africa, with a news bulletin every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today' and follow the links for details. For audio over Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

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Your newsreader this morning is (name), (call sign), on 145,725 and 7,066 MHz from Pretoria, with relays on 3,695 MHz SSB. (Other news readers change to suit).

IN THE NEWS TODAY: SARL ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER NOT TO BE MISSED 3DA0FC SWAZILAND DX-PEDITION REGISTRATION FOR THE SA AMSAT SPACE SYMPOSIUM OPEN MONDAY

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more details on these and other important and interesting items.

SARL ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER NOT TO BE MISSED

The guest speaker at this year's SARL awards dinner is Dr Andrew Collier, Manager: Waves and Space Plasma Group at SANSA Space Sciences at the Hermanus Magnetic Observatory and senior lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He will talk about South Africa's involvement in doing science in Antarctica. The presentation will be well illustrated with some breathtaking photographs and will be of interest to all. As Dr Collier said when accepting the invitation to speak at the dinner, "it will be light on science but heavy on pictures". Every person attending the dinner will take part in the lucky draw for a large number of prizes which include a dual band mobile transceiver, the Yaesu FTM-10R, sponsored by Verstay. The FTM-10R is compact and has a detachable waterproof and dustproof front operation panel, which supports all-weather outdoor activity in a manner never before possible. The detachable front panel may be separated from the main chassis and attached to a flat metal surface with the magnetic mounting bracket. The microphone and PTT button are built into the front panel. The SARL annual awards dinner is the culmination of the SARL National Convention. It all happens in Pinetown from 20 - 22 April. Register for the convention and dinner by visiting www.sarl.org.za and follow the link from the home page or call Mariska at 011 675 2393.

3DA0FC SWAZILAND DX-PEDITION

Pierre, ZS6A, will be active as 3DA0FC at Hawane in KG53MS until Monday evening 9 April 2012. He will monitor the ON4KST cluster for activity and to arrange skeds. Look for Pierre on 50,200 MHz in the mornings for meteor scatter or tropo QSOs, but from midday onwards he will be concentrating on

TEP/F2 openings to Europe and elsewhere. He will operate on SSB, CW and WSJT modes.

NEW 50 MHz EME DIGITAL SARL DX RECORD

On 4 April 2012 Derek Gravette, ZS5Y, established a new 50 MHz EME record with Mike Staal, K6MYC, on the JT65a digital mode. JT65, developed and released in late 2003, is intended for extremely weak but slowly-varying signals, such as those found on tropo-scatter or earth-moon-earth paths. It can decode signals many decibels below the noise floor and can often allow amateurs to successfully exchange contact information without signals being audible to the human ear. JT65A is a “sub-mode” adapted for terrestrial HF communications. Congratulations to Derek and Mike

REGISTRATION FOR THE SA AMSAT SPACE SYMPOSIUM OPEN MONDAY

Details of the SA AMSAT space symposium, which will be held at the University of KwaZulu-Natal on Saturday 12 May, are now available on www.amsatsa.org.za. The theme of the symposium is 50 years of amateur satellites celebrating the launch of OSCAR 1 fifty years ago. The programme features presentations covering a wide range of subjects including several presentations on KLETSkous, SA AMSAT’s CubeSat covering the construction of the space frame, transponder and on board control and telemetry systems. Other presentations include satellite tracking and antenna control systems, lessons learned from SumbandilaSat and the CubeSat programme at CPUT of which the first satellite incorporating a 20 metre beacon which be launched soon, space activities at DUT and a presentation of how the SKA site is becoming a RF free zone and yet offering radio and TV services to people living in the area. Register now to benefit from the early bird registration fee. All the details are on www.amsatsa.org.za.

NO SQUARE KILOMETRE ARRAY (SKA) SITE DECISION

South Africans will have to wait till at least mid May before there it may be decided whether South Africa or Australia will be the country to host the SKA. Members of the SKA Organisation met in Amsterdam on 4 April for their first general meeting. They noted the SKA site selection advisory committee’s report and associated commentary that had been passed to them by the SKA Organisation’s board, which met last month in the UK. The members wished to move ahead with the site selection process and recognised that it is desirable to maintain an inclusive approach to the SKA. They noted that it is important to maximise the value from the investment made by both candidate regions. A small scientific working group was set up to explore possible implementation options that would achieve this. The working group will report back in mid-May. At a recent media briefing the Minister of Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor, said sharing the SKA between Australia and South Africa was not an option. She said South Africa is ready to host the SKA. Commenting on the decision by the general meeting of the SKA organisation the minister said “I

am disappointed at the delay. I hope that the SKA organisation will make a decision in the first half of 2012 and that the decision will reflect the best scientific outcome.”

AMATEUR RADIO BOOKS AT THE SARL NATIONAL CONVENTION

A range of amateur radio books will be on sale at the SARL National Convention, including the hardcover version of the 2012 ARRL Handbook and the hardcover version of the ARRL Antenna Book. You can order books now and pay online and take delivery at the national convention. Details of books available are on www.amateurradio.org.za. At the national convention payment will be by cash only, as no other facilities will be available.

DEATH OF ERNEST WILKINSON

We are sad to report that Ernest J. Wilkinson, inventor of the Wilkinson Combiner, died on March 10. His device, consisting of two $1/4$ wave stubs and a resistor, has the ability to combine two RF signals into one that has twice the power and when turned around it becomes a splitter dividing a signal into two equal parts. If you think about it, there is no other name that is used as often in the microwave industry. Read any microwave journal or go to any microwave conference and you will quickly lose track of how many times you hear Wilkinson's name.

CLUB NEWS

Kempton Park Amateur Radio Technical Society (K.A.R.T.S), ZS6KTS, held its annual general meeting on 10 March 2012 at the Impala Voortrekker Hall, Rooibos Avenue, Allen Grove, Kempton Park. At this meeting the following office bearers were elected: Chairman: Nico van Rensburg - ZS6QL Vice Chairman: Renier Burger - ZS6HOT Secretary: Corrie De Beer - ZS6CDB Treasurer: Barry Els - ZS6OY Ordinary Members: Celeste Searle - ZS6CNS Clive Reeks - ZS6BT Vivian Dold - ZS6VD (Technical Officer)

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is at low levels. Currently only small, stable sunspots are facing the earth. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 54. All the bands from 20 to 10 m will provide lots of DX fun with 15 m providing the best openings with 10 m not far behind. Please visit www.spaceweather.co.za for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS

9 April - Registration for the SA AMSAT space symposium opens. 6-9 April - Western Cape Antique Wireless Association Ekspo near Stanford, contact John, ZS1WJ, on 082 673 5337 for more information. 20 - 22 April SARL Convention in Pinetown. 12 May - SA AMSAT space symposium, visit www.amsatsa.org.za for details and registration.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners. Submit news items - if possible - in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

The SARL also invites you to listen to Amateur Radio Today every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205 and 17 760 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO. For a web-stream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio TODAY', go down the green column and click on 'LISTEN ON THE WEB'. A repeat transmission can be heard on Mondays at 17:30 UTC on 4 895 kHz. Sentech sponsors the ARMI transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League, compiled by Fritz, ZS6SF.

Thank you for listening, 73. /EX